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DEC 22 2005

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County Manager's Office


Departmental Business Plan and Outlook

Department Name: Elections

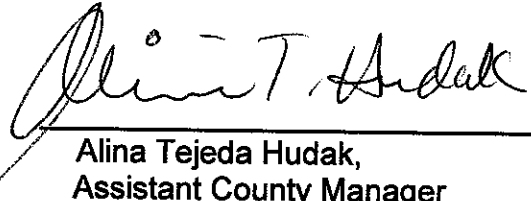
**Fiscal Years:
FY 2005-2006
&
FY 2006-2007**

Plan Date: December 20, 2005

Approved by:



Lester Sola, Department Director



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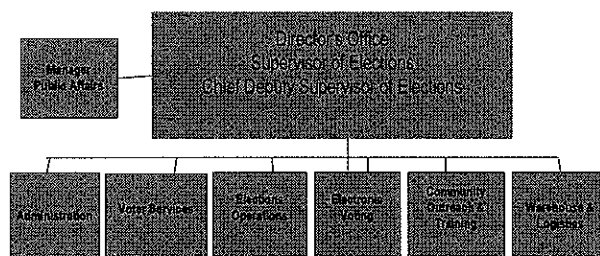
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Goals:	
ES2 Enhance community access to reliable information regarding services and Miami-Dade County government issues	
ES4 Capitalize on technology to improve service, increase efficiency and provide greater information access and exchange	
ES10 Ensure that elections are free, fair, accurate, convenient and accessible to all eligible voters	

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Elections Department, under the direction of the Supervisor of Elections, administers, prepares, conducts and tabulates in a correct, uniform and impartial manner all Federal, State, County and Municipal elections in accordance to Florida Statutes. The Department also provides election services and assistance to municipalities, School Districts and Special Taxing Districts of Miami-Dade County.

In our effort to enhance and promote the democratic principles of free and fair elections, the Department actively promotes community outreach and voter education programs throughout Miami-Dade County. The Department also serves in a ministerial role for candidates, campaign financing and reporting, and provides candidate and voting information.



The following performance improvements and goals are projected to be accomplished during the current and future fiscal year:

- Increased community outreach efforts to expand voter awareness
- Enhanced voter registration efforts throughout the County
- Development of procedural checklists for tabulation and ballot activities
- Monitoring and enforcement of departmental policies and procedures
- Increased number of early voting locations and resources throughout the County
- Increased responsiveness to voters, candidates, and citizens
- Improved and enhanced staffing reorganization and realigned functions and reporting relationships within the departmental divisions to better enforce and manage the departmental operational requirements
- Meet ADA compliance of all polling locations to ensure compliance with State and Federal requirements
- Implement the new statewide voter registration system database
- Automate the absentee ballot mailing and verification process
- Provided user friendly sample ballots and voter guides

A number of initiatives are in place that are important to the Department's successful implementation of the business plan:

- Improve community relations and business partnerships to improve quality of poll workers and polling locations
- Aggressive pursuit of the continued implementation and compliance with the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), namely the modification of the Voter Registration System by 2006 for statewide management of the entire system
- Implementation of an asset management system for election related equipment such as iVotronics, Flashcards, PEBs, Printers and Laptops
- Procure additional tabulation machines to improve the processing time of paper ballots
- Maintain updated departmental policies and procedures consistent with State legislative changes
- Aggressive recruitment, training and retraining of poll workers throughout the County
- Monitoring Federal and State legislation to ensure compliance with election related laws
- Monitoring campaign financing and reporting requirements and provide notification to candidates as required by law
- Improvement and enhancement of responses to public records request
- Administration of effective and efficient municipal elections
- Implementation of department wide electronic document management system

INTRODUCTION

Department Purpose/Mission Statement

The mission of the Elections Department is to ensure that elections are free, fair, accurate, convenient and accessible to all voters throughout Miami-Dade County.

The Department ensures adherence to Local, State and Federal election laws, maintains accurate voter registration records, election related reports, and serves all citizens and municipalities in election related matters.

Department Description

The Elections Department, under the direction of the Supervisor of Elections, administers, prepares, conducts and tabulates in a correct, uniform and impartial manner all Federal, State, County and Municipal elections in accordance with Florida Statutes. The Department also provides election services and assistance to municipalities, School Districts, and Special Taxing Districts of Miami-Dade County.

In our effort to enhance and promote demographic principles of free and fair elections, the Department actively promotes community outreach and voter education programs throughout Miami-Dade County. The Department also serves in a ministerial role for candidates, campaign financing and reporting, and provides candidate and voting information.

Elections Operations:

The Operations division encompasses all aspects of absentee ballots, polling places and new forms and policies development, to insure state compliance. Monitors applicable local, state and federal legislation. Responsible for ensuring that all polling locations meet Federal and State ADA requirements. Coordinates the function of Election Central during any municipal, countywide, state or federal elections.

Electronic Voting:

The Electronic Voting division has various responsibilities in preparation for any election. The technical team is tasked with preparing the ballot design and layout; creating election definition and programming of flash cards and Personal Electronic Ballots (PEBs); coordinating the tabulation of all municipal, state, countywide and federal elections; verifies the maintenance and repair of electronic equipment; and aggressively tests and secures all ballot configurations; retrieves audit data from the electronic units and secures the results. Manages the internal IT Systems staff and supports the absentee ballot and statistical election data analysis function.

Voter Services:

This division maintains all records and registration of eligible voters, assembles precinct registers for all elections, maintains the Voter Registration application system. Also manages the planning, coordination, and supervision of the early voting functions inclusive of staffing and security for all early voting sites.

Warehouse and Logistics:

This division manages the inventory of the iVotronics and related voting equipment; prepares a detailed logistic plan of numerous delivery routes to ensure the timely delivery and pick-up of equipment to and from polling locations. Manages the preparation and deployment of voting equipment for all municipal and countywide elections. Supervises the day-to-day warehouse operations and related activities. Manages departments and election records management function; coordinates equipment maintenance and repair.

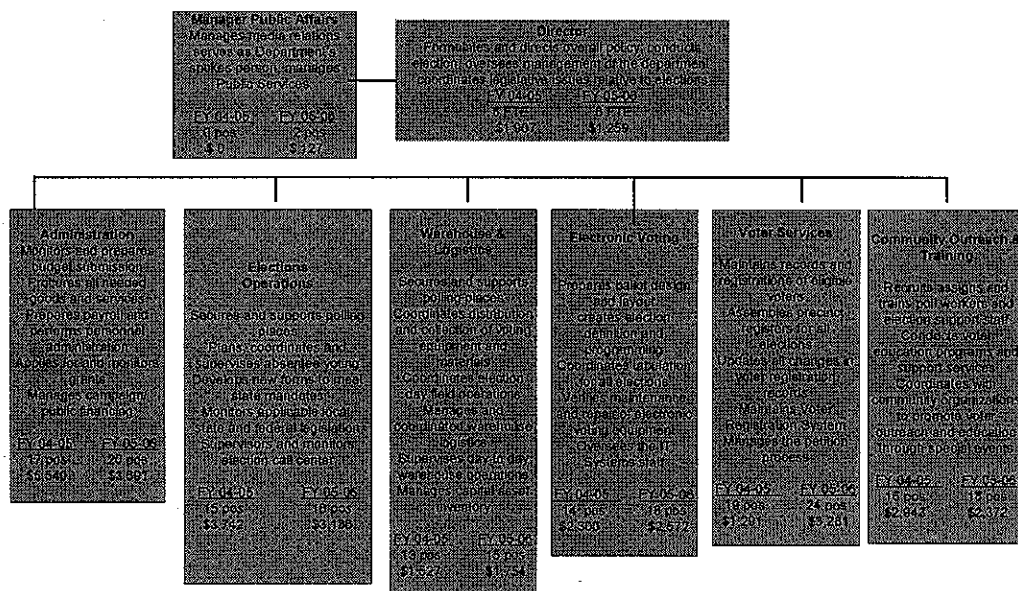
Community Outreach and Training:

The Community Outreach and Training division is responsible for the coordination of all event planning and training of poll workers and election support staff. This involves the recruitment, assignment and training of all poll workers and election support staff; conducts voter education programs and support services; communication with community organizations to promote voter outreach and education through special events.

Administration:

The Administration division is responsible for maintaining the Department's general business practices. These duties include budget preparation and monitoring; manages the satellite office (VIC), campaign financing functions; procuring of goods and services, payroll preparation and managing personnel related functions; prepares invoices for municipal elections; collecting and distributing revenues and applying for and monitoring grant disbursements.

Organization and Staffing Issues



Seasonal staffing is not included above but is required to support the many functions of a major election event.

With the addition of nineteen (19) new positions, the Department will realign its divisional duties to enforce an improved operational structure. This realignment will have a positive impact on the Department's overall effectiveness, including:

- Implementation of the Electronic Document Management System to enhance and meet state required guidelines for record retention
- Implementation of Asset Management to enforce and improve capital and asset inventory process
- Implementation of statewide Voter Registration database
- Apply new technological enhancements to automate the mailing and verification of all absentee ballots

Staffing Levels (Optional, if total is included on previous T.O. Chart)

Director	8	6
Manager, Public Affairs	0	2
Administration	17	20
Elections Operations	15	18
Warehouse & Logistics	13	15
Electronic Voting - Systems	14	18
Voter Services (Applications)	19	24
Community Relations & Training	16	18
Total	102	121

Fiscal Environment

Revenues and Expenditures by Fund

(All Dollars in Thousands)

Prior Fiscal Year FY 04-05 Actual	Current Fiscal Year FY 05-06 Budget	Projection as of November 2005
\$307	\$585	\$585
\$212	\$400	\$400
\$63		\$64
\$19,647	\$17,256	\$17,192
\$20,229	\$18,241	\$18,241
\$12,111	\$11,585	\$11,600
\$8,069	\$6,531	\$6,516
\$49	\$125	\$125
\$20,229	\$18,241	\$18,241

Equity in pooled cash (for proprietary funds only)

Fund/ Subfund	Prior FY ____ Beginning Year Actual	Prior FY ____ Year- end Actual (Est.)	Current FY ____ Year-end Budget
	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total			

Not applicable

Business Environment

The Elections Department serves more than a million registered voters in Miami-Dade County, all of whom are at least 18 years old and are United States citizens. The Department has continued to use the touch screen voting machines known as iVotronic balloting terminals. Although the Department has continued to operate in a highly scrutinized environment, the Department has delivered two countywide elections and numerous municipal elections portraying a higher degree of experience and confidence. An aggressive voter education and community outreach process has been implemented to enhance and increase voter confidence and satisfaction.

Numerous federal and state laws impact the way the Department conducts business. The Help America Vote Act (HAVA) continues to pave the way into creating a central voters database which will require the Department to maintain compliancy with the standards defined by the State; this process will be implemented by January 2006. Additionally, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), has set strict accessibility standards which are currently being addressed. All polling places must be brought into compliance by the third quarter of 2006. The Department was allocated capital funding for the current fiscal year to be able to comply with the state mandated timeline.

The Department's business environment is impacted by numerous advocacy groups, such as the Miami Dade Election Reform Coalition (MDERC), who have raised a number of issues requiring the Department's attention. Foremost among those issues is a proposal to require a paper audit trail of votes. A second option is being considered to replace the existing iVotronic touch screen voting machines with an Optical Scanning process which would require a significant change to the existing process.

Customer Feedback Plan

Providing opportunities for voters to participate in the electoral process before going to polls is an important step toward building voter confidence. In an effort to facilitate voter feedback, the Department developed a "survey card" that was distributed to voters on election day in the 2004 election cycle. This initiative will be expanded to allow continuous feedback opportunities via detailed surveys to gauge voter confidence during the 2006 election cycle. Survey questions will solicit feedback in the areas of voter confidence, voting equipment, polling place accessibility, convenience and ADA compliance, poll worker knowledge and overall service delivery.

Critical Success Factors

The Department has embarked an aggressive community outreach voter awareness program focusing on improving voter education initiatives by mailing sample ballots, mailing polling location postcards to all registered voters' households. The number of early voting sites has increased throughout the County to enhance and improve service to the voters.

Critical to the Department's success is creating a voting process that all voters can have complete confidence in. The Department has taken affirmative steps toward strengthening standard operating processes to include increased vigilance in equipment preparation and testing; augmenting the pool of poll workers with more technologically savvy individuals; expanding poll worker knowledge base and training opportunities through web based refresher courses and quarterly poll

worker newsletters; and increasing polling place accessibility and convenience through aggressive compliance with polling place ADA mandates.

The Department plans to implement an electronic document management system which will ensure the safekeeping of election critical records, save space and improve record archival process.

The Department received \$300,000 from the State for voter education incentives which requires a matching percentage from the General Fund. This funding allows the Department to actively promote and achieve our goals in being able to provide free and fair elections and enhancing voter confidence.

The Department will implement an automated absentee mailing system which will reduce labor expenses and increase customer service and improve the tracking of the ballot from original mailing date to voter destination and final delivery. Processing time for the absentee cycle will be improved allowing us to meet the required state mandated deadlines.

The Elections Department becomes an active partner in the preparation, administration and conduct of all local elections. The Department monitors special election requests and prepares invoices to municipalities to recover the cost incurred for each election. Costs of elections vary depending on size and total number of registered voters in the respective area. Cost recovery measures are monitored closely to ensure accuracy and timeliness.

The Department has worked closely with the Ethics Commission and the Inspector General on the implementation and administration of campaign financing directives as mandated by State and County legislation.

Future Outlook

During the past year the Elections Department has successfully held two countywide elections and numerous municipal elections, all of which were accurately conducted ensuring that we meet our goal of conducting free, fair and accurate elections. The Department is evaluating the automation of the absentee ballot process for incoming and outgoing mail ballots and the verification process. This solution will expedite the authentication of an absentee ballot reducing manual/seasonal labor while providing more quality control measures and ensuring an enhancement of service delivery.

The implementation of a department wide Electronic Document Management System will also ensure the safekeeping of election critical reports to be recorded on electronic media minimizing the need to store paper reports. Archival information will be maintained on-line which will expedite the delivery of public records request.

An aggressive project is underway to ensure that all polling places meet the state

mandated requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The State has issued a mandate that all polling locations must meet this requirement by mid-year. The allocation of funds received this year through our capital project program will help us meet our goal.

To protect and ensure voter confidence, continuous analysis of existing business practices is necessary. The County has engaged in a comprehensive analysis of voting equipment options to ensure that the system of voting in Miami-Dade County is not only the most operationally cost-efficient but is a system that offers a high degree of openness and trust to voters.

E-Precinct provides an effective real-time method of monitoring and managing Election Day polling place openings and closings, and facilitating prompt responsiveness to staffing and supply issues through a targeted question and feedback process. The Department will be refining this process based on lessons learned through major County-wide and municipal elections.

During the upcoming calendar year, the Department will be evaluating its processes to ensure that we are in full compliance with state guidelines as we prepare to conduct the major elections of 2006.

THE PLAN

Overview

Our FY 2005/06 – 2006/07 business plan draws heavily on previously adopted work including the Miami-Dade County Strategic Plan. Miami-Dade County's Strategic Planning initiative is both a plan and a process. The plan provides a framework at a broad Countywide level where we want to go, how we get there, and how we measure our progress along the way. The process ensures increased communications at all levels of County government using consistent terms.

- Our Countywide *Vision of "delivering excellence every day"* communicates the community's shared vision for the best possible future for Miami-Dade County government.
- Our Countywide *Mission* statement communicates the role of our government. Miami-Dade County's mission statement is "*delivering excellent public services that address our community's needs and enhance our quality of life*".
- Our *Guiding Principles* communicate to all levels of our organization the manner in which we expect all decisions, interactions and activities to be performed.
- Our *Strategic Themes* represent what we consider to be the most significant challenges and opportunities facing Miami-Dade County government.
- We have developed *Goals* across all County Departments. These goals provide

Departmental Business Plan and Outlook

Department Name:

Fiscal Years: 2005/2006 – 2006/2007

the direction the County must move in to address the priority strategic themes and help guide us towards the desired future.

- For each goal we have defined a desired *Outcome* or set of outcomes that the County must achieve to be successful in accomplishing the goal. These outcomes are from the customer/community perspective (e.g. quality of service provided, customer satisfaction).
- For each outcome(s), implementing *Strategies* summarize at a broad countywide level the actions that will be taken to achieve the outcome(s).
- *Key Performance Indicators* are the measures that express the County's intentions from the Strategic Plan. Associated *Key Performance Objectives* assign measurable targets and timelines to the key performance indicators while the *Performance Measure* is the specific unit of measure. Departments may develop *Additional Performance Objectives*.
- *Department Programs/Initiatives* (may include activities and tasks) are actions or groups of actions that will be undertaken by a particular department in a specific fiscal year in order to implement a strategy.

As part of the County's Strategic Plan, the Board of County Commissioners endorsed nine priority strategic themes countywide. This Department is primarily supportive of the following strategic themes:

- *Ensure Miami-Dade County operates in a fiscally responsible and stable manner*
- *Promote responsible and comprehensive policy development through effective planning for land use, transportation and growth management*
- *Continuously improve the performance and capabilities of Miami-Dade County operations by maximizing technology and fostering innovation, and increasing access to and information regarding services*

Supporting these themes are supporting goals and priority outcomes that directly relate to this department. These are provided along with the Department's Programs, Initiatives, and Performance Measures for fiscal year 2006.

Department-related Strategic Plan Goals:

- *ES-10 Ensure that elections are free, fair, accurate, convenient and accessible to all eligible voters*
- *ES-2 Enhance community access to reliable information regarding services and Miami-Dade County government issues*
- *ES-4 Capitalize on technology to improve service. Increase efficiency and*

provide greater information access and exchange

Department-related Strategic Plan Priority Outcomes:

- *Educated Voters*
- *Opportunities for every registered voter to conveniently cast a vote*
- *Votes counted and reported accurately and quickly*
- *Integrity of voter records maintained*
- *Integrity of candidate and public official records maintained*
- *Easily accessible information regarding County services and programs*
- *Responsive communication services*
- *Conveniently accessed and easy-to-use services*
- *Satisfied customers – satisfied voters*
- *User friendly e-government sharing information and providing expanded hours and services*
- *County processes improved through information technology*